



MARKET HARBOROUGH
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE

**Health and Sanitary State of
the District for the year**

1945,

BY

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AND

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MARKET HARBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the Medical Officer of Health and the Sanitary Inspector for 1945.

GENTLEMEN,

We have the honour to present our annual report for 1945.

Dr. C. T. Scott retired from the office of Medical Officer of Health on 30th November, 1945. He gave many years of devoted service to the Council and the Town, and gained the respect and esteem of all those with whom he came in contact. We feel sure that his retirement from public life will be regretted by all and that he will have their best wishes for the future.

STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	4,771
Population (Registrar General's Estimate) ...	9,792
Number of inhabited houses	2,945
Rateable value	£65,372
Sum represented by penny rate	£262

INDUSTRIES.

There has been considerable progress in the return to peacetime conditions, with the inclusion of some additional factories and the manufacture of such commodities as toys, household goods, electrically driven chassis, engineering components, etc., and embracing a wider range of the articles enumerated in the report for 1938.

Vital Statistics :—

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Live Births : Legitimate	95	77	172
Illegitimate	10	12	22
	<hr/> 105	<hr/> 89	<hr/> 194
Still Births : Legitimate	6	2	8
Illegitimate	1	1	2
	<hr/> 7	<hr/> 3	<hr/> 10
Deaths of infants under 1 year : Legitimate	3	6	9
Illegitimate	—	1	1
	<hr/> 3	<hr/> 7	<hr/> 10
Deaths (all ages) ...	57	65	122

	1945.	1944.	England and Wales. 1945.
Live birth-rate (per 1,000 population) :	18.9	20.0	16.1
Still birth-rate („ „ „) :	1.0	0.3	0.46
Death-rate („ „ „) :	12.5	12.6	11.4
Infant mortality rate („ „ live-births) :	51.0	45.0	46.0

Population.—This is slightly lower than the Registrar-General's figure for last year (9,972).

Birth Rate.—This is also slightly lower than last year, but is still higher than the average for England and Wales.

Death Rate.—Almost the same as last year and slightly above the average.

Infant Mortality Rate.—This has shown an increase since last year and is above the average for the country. There were five deaths from Premature Birth.

Puerperal Fever.—There were no deaths from puerperal causes, but one case of puerperal pyrexia was notified.

Causes of Death.—The chief causes of death were :—

Cancer	... ..	23
Stroke	... ..	16
Heart Disease	... ..	28
Tuberculosis	... ..	1

There were no deaths from accident, pneumonia, infantile diarrhoea or other infectious disease.

Laboratory Facilities.—There were 213 examinations carried out at the County Council Laboratory as follows :—

Sewage and Water Analyses	... ..	59
Milk Examinations (Bacteriological)	... ..	52
Sputa for T.B.	... ..	51
Swabs for Diphtheria	... ..	18
Milk for Phosphatase test	... ..	14
Blood for Wassermann test	... ..	4
Urine General and Bacteriological	... ..	4
Urine for T.B.	... ..	4
Films for Gonococci	... ..	2
Miscellaneous	... ..	5

Day Nursery.—The Day Nursery has functioned efficiently during the year. The accommodation is still for 48 children and the average attendance was 40.

Social Centre—for evacuated women was closed in December, owing to the return of the evacuees to their homes.

Ambulance Facilities.—Ambulance Services for infectious cases to the isolation hospitals are provided by the County Council. Otherwise all ambulance facilities are provided by the local branch of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade in a very efficient and prompt way. The personnel of the Brigade give their services voluntarily.

Home Nursing.—One district nurse-midwife is employed by the local hospital (subsidised by your Council). No other home nursing is provided.

Centres and Clinics.—The Scabies Clinic is still available, but there have been no applications for treatment since last May. There are no other treatment clinics. Ante natal clinics are held weekly in the Maternity Block at the Hospital, and by the district nurse in the M. & C.W. building. The M. & C.W.,

Clinic is in charge of the Health Visitor and a voluntary staff of ladies from the town. There are sessions once a week, and a doctor is in attendance at alternate sessions. A full time Health Visitor is employed by the Council. She pays regular visits to all children under 5 years of age. Your Health Visitor resigned in September, and her position was temporarily and very efficiently filled by Mrs. Turner, who, although she had retired from active service, willingly came forward and averted a difficult situation, and who deserves every thanks.

Hospitals.—The voluntary hospital which is subsidised by the local authority has a capacity for approximately 18 beds and has a maternity block of 15 beds. The Public Assistance Infirmary has 50 beds. Both hospitals have had considerable difficulty in providing sufficient nursing staff.

Diphtheria Immunisation.—The Council provides free immunisation for all children,—for those under 5 years at the M. & C.W. Centre. With the help of the teachers and school nurse the older children are immunised in the schools. The great majority of the children in the town have been immunised.

Health Service Officers :—

- 1 Medical Officer of Health (Part-time).
- 1 Sanitary Inspector (Whole-time).
- 1 Health Visitor (Whole-time).

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.—Early in the War period, arrangements were made whereby the Public Baths filtration and chlorination plant could be switched over to purifying River Welland water for public supply. During the year under review, the shortage caused by War population increase and the continued drought made it necessary to augment the supply by this means in the first four months of the year, and again from September to the end of 1945. A full twenty-four hours per day supply has been maintained all through the year.

Bacteriological examinations of the water going into the piped supply were made with the following results :—

					Satisfactory.	Unsatisfactory.
Raw water	...	...	...	...	4	0
Treated water	...	...	...	...	62	2

The two samples of river water classed as unsatisfactory, were only designated "doubtful." There were no chemical analyses, and the waters were not liable to have plumbosolvent action.

The quality of the supply was good throughout the year, and no instances of contamination occurred.

A scheme for additional works to double the existing quantity was deposited with the Ministry of Health in December and awaits the holding of a Public Inquiry.

The supply to dwelling-houses in the district is as follows :—

	Houses.	Population.
Number supplied from private wells	58	193
Number supplied from Public Water Mains :—		
(a) Direct to the houses ...	2,687	8,934
(b) By means of stand-pipes ...	200	665

Two samples from private wells were examined. One well was found to be polluted and was closed, and the piped supply has been substituted.

A copy of the bacteriological report of the Leicestershire County Council, dated 27th July, 1945 regarding the last sample from the town main, is appended :—

"No evidence of coliform organisms in 10 c.c's.
Plate count sterile."

Drainage and Sewerage.—There has been a small extension to accommodate a scheme for the erection of 100 houses on the Bowden Fields Estate.

The Council have directed their Engineer to report upon the question of a relief trunk sewer and additional sewage disposal works.

Closet Accommodation.—Five additional water closets have been provided, and the total in the district now numbers approximately 4,135. About twenty properties are situated beyond the reach of the sewerage system, and are provided with sanitary conveniences of the conservancy type.

Public Cleansing.—All houses in the district are provided with dustbins, although a considerable number of bins are in urgent need of replacement. A system is in operation whereby the foreman refuse collector notifies the Health Department of instances where bins are worn out, and the owner of the premises concerned is informed. In this way, despite the shortage of supply, 93 houses were provided with new dustbins. House refuse and salvage material are collected, as far as possible, weekly throughout the area, and during the year a total of 2,600 tons was received at the Destructor Depot, of which the following quantities were salvaged :—

	Tons.	Cwts.
Paper	44	8
Metal	66	6
Textiles	14	7
Bottles and Jars	2	8
Bones	8	10
	<hr/> 135	<hr/> 19

These amounts showed a slight decrease on those of the previous year.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Complaints received and investigated	436
Defects or nuisances dealt with	662
Informal Notices served	266
Statutory Notices served	1

Inspections :—

	1st. Visits.	Re-Visits.
Animal Keeping	12	2
Bakehouses	2	0
Dairies and Cowsheds	16	73
Dwelling Houses	282	290
Factories, etc.	41	13
Food Premises	97	49
Offensive Trades	2	0
Rats and Mice Destruction	306	2,114
Shops	8	0
Slaughter House and Meat Inspection	1	250
Tents, Vans, Sheds, etc.	4	1
Verminous Premises	47	119
Water Supplies	3	7
Other Premises	71	49
	<hr/> 892	<hr/> 2,967

Dwelling Houses :—

General Structural repairs effected	...	...	...	...	32
Drains and Sanitary fittings repaired and new provided					63
Dustbins provided	...	...	...	...	93
Cleansing and other defects remedied	...	...	...		23
Licences renewed under Defence Regulation 68AA					2

Factories, etc. :—

New sanitary accommodation provided	...	...	...	2
Drainage, ventilation and other defects remedied	...			4
Means of escape in case of fire :—				
Improved	...	...	...	1
Certificates issued	2

Shops :—

Defects in sanitary conveniences repaired	3
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Miscellaneous Nuisances :—

Drainage defects repaired	9
Offensive accumulations removed	18
Animal keeping nuisances abated	...	...	...	...	5
Smoke nuisances abated	...	...	...	...	3
Other defects remedied	...	...	...	...	14

Public Mortuary :—

The building in King's Road was in use on five occasions during the year. Regular attention to hygienic requirements has been carried out by the Council's Disinfecting Officer.

Disinfection and Disinfestation :—

Infected rooms fumigated	...	...	...	...	36
Verminous rooms treated	...	...	...	...	312
Articles of bedding, clothing, etc :—					
Steam disinfected	...	...	...	...	232
Destroyed	...	...	...	...	22
Other articles disinfected	...	...	...	...	56

Number of instances of bug infestation :—

Council Houses	...	...	...	...	0
Other Houses	...	...	...	...	12

Articles of furniture from evacuee hostels and billets fumigated in gastight chamber owing to bug infestation or as a precaution	922
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Other infestations of domestic insect pests treated :—

Ants	12
Cockroaches	4
Crickets	1
Fleas	10
Miscellaneous	8

Rats and Mice Destruction :—

The arrangement with the adjoining Rural District Council for the joint employment of a full time Rats Officer ceased on March 31st, and the Council appointed their Disinfecting Officer to carry out these duties in conjunction with his disinfection work, etc. This officer had previously attended the Ministry of Food's Course of Instruction on Rodent Destruction and had occasionally assisted the Rats Officer.

The whole of the sewerage system received two treatments during the year. In the first treatment 349 manholes were pre-baited with damp sausage rusk, and "takes" of pre-bait were recorded in 59 manholes. The latter were then poison baited by adding Zinc Phosphide to the bait base, and 45 takes of poison were recorded. In the second treatment, the manholes where takes of pre-bait took place in the first treatment, were again baited and on this occasion bread mash was used. "Takes" were recorded in 13 manholes and these were poison baited by adding Barium Carbonate to the bait base, and resulted in 5 takes of poison. The Technical Branch of the Infestation Division of the Ministry of Food stated that the estimated kill as a result of these two treatments was 526 rats.

The following is a statement of work done during the year under the Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919, and the Infestation Order 1943 :—

Reports and complaints of infestations investigated ...	236
Infestations dealt with :—Rats 207, mice 27	234

(Classification of infestations :—Major 1, Medium 18, Minor 215)

Premises visited	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	306
Repeat visits	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,114
Pre-baits laid	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,448
Poison baits laid	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,741
Occasions when gas used	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
„ „ traps set for :—Rats 154, Mice 105	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	259
Dead bodies removed after poisoning or gassing, and from traps :—Rats 369, Mice 176	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	545
Estimated number of rats killed (Ministry formula)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,545
Requests for services by payment	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	91
Proofing of buildings carried out	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
Refuse removed and other improvements effected	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5

The infestations dealt with include :—

Allotments 3, billet 1, ditches 8, drains 2, factories 7, food premises 12, hedgerows 2, hotels 4, houses and surroundings 86, institutions 5, pigsties 7, poultry pens 51, refuse disposal sites 3, rivers and streams 3, school 1, sewerage system sectors 5, shops 4, warehouses 8, workshop 1, other premises 21.

Special Classes of Premises and Occupations subject to Control.

Written consent to establishment of trade of Rag and Bone Dealer renewed	1
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Petrol and Carbide Stores :—

	Petroleum Spirit.	Carbide of Calcium.
Number of licences issued	0	0
„ „ „ renewed	30	1
„ „ contraventions rectified	7	0

Swimming Bath :—

The Council's covered pool was in use for swimming purposes during the summer months. The establishment is equipped with a Paterson filtering chlorinating and aerating plant, which has operated satisfactorily. Daily tests for chlorine content have been made by the Baths Manager, and one sample for bacteriological examination was collected and the report was satisfactory.

HOUSING.

No new houses have been erected during the year.

Preparations have commenced for the erection of twenty-seven "Spooner" type temporary pre-fabricated houses on the Victoria Road Site by H.M. Office of Works.

The Council's application for the adaption of the buildings of a prisoners of war camp for urgent temporary housing purposes, did not receive the necessary sanction of the Ministry concerned.

The programme for the erection of permanent houses by the Council is as follows :—

First	year	...	...	...	50 houses
Second	,,	...	...	...	50 ,,
Third	,,	...	...	...	100 ,,
Fourth	,,	...	...	...	100 ,,
Fifth	,,	...	...	...	100 ,,

The construction of roads, sewers, etc. on the Bowden Fields Estate is nearing completion in readiness for the first and second years' instalments comprising 100 houses.

The present demand for houses is indicated by the fact that there are 420 applications on the Council's waiting list, and a considerable proportion consists of families living in rooms.

The repair of sanitary defects and maintenance repair work of dwelling houses continue to present many difficulties owing to shortage of labour and in the supply of materials and consequently many houses are in urgent need of renovation.

1.—Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :—

(1) (a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	98
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	196
(2) (a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 and 1932	0
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	0

(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation 0

(4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation 60

2.—Remedy of defects during the year without Service of Formal Notices :—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers 54

3.—Action under Statutory Powers during the year ... 0

4.—Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding :—

Considerable overcrowding exists and there has been very little improvement in this respect owing to the shortage of houses. Records are being prepared of cases of overcrowding with a view to their alleviation as soon as circumstances permit. In the meantime, the conversion of a few houses for accommodating additional families has assisted to a limited extent.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply :—

Trade.	No. on Register.
Cowkeepers	9
Dairymen and Purveyors of Milk (other than cowkeepers)	4
Farms and other premises	19

The following licences have been issued under the Milk (Special Designations) Orders 1936 and 1941 :—

“Tuberculin Tested”—Dealer’s Bottling	2
do. —Dealers	2

"Pasteurised" (plants)	...	...	...	...	...	2
do.	—Dealers	...	...	...	...	1
do.	—Supplementary (Retailing)					1

Milk Sampling :—

Class	Number of samples for bacteriological examination.	Number Satisfactory.	Number Unsatisfactory.
"Tuberculin Tested"	2	2	0
"Accredited" ...	6	6	0
"Pasteurised"	15	11	4
Ordinary	8	7	1
	—	—	—
	31	26	5
	—	—	—

With regard to the five unsatisfactory samples, all failed in the Methylene blue test and one "Pasteurised" sample also failed to pass the phosphatase test. Two of the "Pasteurised" samples were of milk received from outside the district. In each case the retailer concerned was notified of the result of the sample and local premises and plant were inspected and the co-operation of the retailer was sought with a view to improvement. Repeat samples in all instances proved to be satisfactory.

All registered premises were inspected periodically and six items of improvement in structural conditions or cleanly methods were recorded. A large proportion of the milk retailed in the district is now included under one or other of the special designations, and only one complaint of souring milk was received during the year.

Meat and Other Foods :—

There is one Regional Slaughter-house in the district, and this serves the town and the adjoining rural area. The premises are owned by the Council, and are under the control of the Ministry of Food. During the year, 6,759 animals were slaughtered in this establishment, and all of the carcasses and organs were inspected before release for sale. The total weight of meat condemned as unfit for human food was 17 tons 1 cwt. 1 qr. One licence to slaughter was renewed.

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep. and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed and inspected	1,036	196	589	4761	177
All diseases except Tuberculosis :—					
Whole carcasses condemned	7	9	6	95	2
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	254	51	7	232	15
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	25.2	30.6	2.2	6.9	13.0
Tuberculosis only :—					
Whole carcasses condemned	9	6	2	—	2
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	102	32	—	—	10
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ...	10.7	19.4	0.3	—	6.8

Requests to inspect doubtful or damaged foodstuffs numbered 58, and it was found necessary to condemn as unfit for human consumption a total weight of 3,851lbs. consisting of many varieties of commodities and chiefly rationed foods. The number of Condemn Certificates (including meat) issued was 282.

Defects remedied at food premises :—

Structural and drainage defects rectified ...	14
Sanitary conveniences provided at cafes ...	2
Refuse removed	6
Other defects remedied	3

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifications :

Scarlet Fever	...	...	2	Measles	...	...	...	31
Whooping Cough	...	...	0	Pneumonia	...	...	...	4
Diphtheria	...	...	0	Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	1					

No deaths from notifiable disease.

Tuberculosis :—

New Cases :—

			Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.
Male	...	...	11	0
Female	...	...	4	0
			—	—
Total	...	...	15	0
			—	—
Deaths :—				
Male	...	...	0	0
Female	..	...	1	0
			—	—
Total	...	...	1	0
			—	—

Yours faithfully,

S. P. STOKER,
Medical Officer of Health.

B. G. ELLIOTT,
Sanitary Inspector.